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los angeles valley college's
VALLEY STAR
the independent student newspaper

MONARCHS CAN'T CATCH THE OWLS

VALLEY LOSES ITS FOURTH CONSECUTIVE GAME.

SEE PAGE 4

lavalleystar.com | February 13, 2013 | Volume 78 Issue 1

FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS

Valley College's Financial Aid office takes steps to ensure students receive their money ontime.

JULIO FLORES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The fall 2012 semester saw some Valley College students receive their Federal Pell and Cal Grant money late or, in some cases, after the semester ended. This semester, the Financial Aid office is taking steps to avoid a repeat of the same delay.

The delay, said Financial Aid Manager Vernon Bridges, was due to new district rules that forced students to complete financial aid forms online and the requirement of the Education Department on the federal level for students to link their tax information with the IRS to their FAFSA.

"To date, the district is working on finalizing processes for the new year in order to minimize confusion and do away with complicated steps to the process," said Bridges. "We anticipate a much smoother application experience for 2013-14."

April 10 is Financial Aid Awareness Day, in which all LACCD campuses will be participating, but Valley's Financial Aid office will host its own FAFSA Awareness Day in Monarch Hall, Feb. 19, from noon to 2 p.m. During this time, the office will highlight application procedures for the school year of 2013-14, according to Bridges.

"Sometimes, the FAFSA is not easily understood, said broadcast major Summer James. "So, it's great to have the lab and an Awareness Day coming up."

For the upcoming school year of fall 2013 to spring 2014, the FAFSA application deadline is March 2 to be eligible for grants. The Federal Pell Grant allows students to receive up to $5,500 a school year, and the Cal Grant awards qualifying students up to $12,192 a year. Students can apply at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/.

"The grant money really helps a lot," said cinema major Michael James. "It gives me more time to concentrate on getting good grades. It also helps buy books and provides money for school projects."

The Financial Aid office lab has an array of computers and student workers tasked with helping fill out forms and answer questions. Located in the Student Services Center, the office hours for the first two weeks of school are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 1p.m. After Feb. 19, the office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. as well as Fridays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

Internship

By enrolling in the Cooperetave education program, Valley college students can earn college credit from an internship

JAHSAUDI PERKINS | VALLEY STAR

INSTALLED BUT IGNORED - A studen walks past one of Valley College's three newly installed Emergency call box. Pressing the emergency button on the beaker alerts the Sheriff's Station of an emergency.

COLLEGE AIMS TO MAKE CAMPUS SAFER

Los Angeles Sheriff's Department aim to make Valley College a safer campus for students.

RACHEL PARSONS
STAFF WRITER

In the wake of two shootings at the University of Southern California last year, Valley College ratcheted up its security systems. In addition to a Sheriff's Station escort service and upgrades to lighting and signs, emergency phones have been installed in Lot A.

"So far, they've been used for the wrong purposes: Pranks [and] people calling us about parking citations," said Officer Billy Guzman of the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department station at Valley.

Three emergency call boxes attached to tall posts topped with blue lights were put in various locations at the beginning of the fall semester as part of a broader plan to make Valley safer. The plan has also included the trimming or removal of dozens of shrubs and trees all over the grounds to increase visibility. But some students are having problems spotting the call boxes.

"I've been coming here for a month now, and I walk past it every day," said student Jay-Onn Myles, who attended the winter session. "Didn't even notice it." He stood at the most obvious of the three phones in the lot, on the pedestrian walkway next to a parking pass machine. Noting how long it took to read the four lines of instruction on the box in order to operate it correctly, he said, "they could definitely make it simpler."

"That's one of the defects," said Guzman. The phones don't operate like a telephone with a two-way line. "If you don't know how to use it, and you have an emergency and you're trying to run for your life, you have to hold and push the button like an intercom."

Lot A was chosen for the first boxes because it has the most foot traffic, being near the Metro stop, but more are coming, as part of the $626 million renovation of the school.

"The improvements will include more emergency phones throughout the campus, including some buildings, a parking structure, and all projects are slated to be finished around 2014-2015," said Deputy Rick Baker, team leader of the Valley Sheriff's Station.

Petty theft is the most frequent non-violent crime at Valley for the past six months, followed by burglary, with a high amount of those occurring in the North Gym locker rooms, according the crime statistics published by the Sheriff's Station.

There are no violent crimes listed in these reports, but the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department did report two non-aggravated assaults during this time period to the website crimemapping.com, which compiles crime reports from the Los Angeles Police Department as well as the Sheriff's Department.

The mapped location of these fights is the corner of Fulton Avenue and Burbank Boulevard, next to Lot A. It is unclear whether these were handled by the school's Sheriff's Station, or by the arm of the department that covers L.A. Metro.

SAFETY TIPS

The Valley College Sheriff's Station shares these tips for a safer campus:
Register with AlertU, Valley's emergency text notification system, through the school's website.
Use the Sheriff's escort service. Call 2911 from any campus phone or (818) 947-2911.
Don't leave book bags or laptops unattended.
Be cognizant of surroundings, including people lingering nearby
Become familiar with new emergency call boxes

STUDENTS LOOK OFF CAMPUS FOR DEALS ON BOOKS

Valley College students are looking off campus to find better deals on books for school.

SANDRA SAY
STAFF WRITER

The beginning of each semester also marks the beginning of students' hunt for textbooks; and the majority of Valley College students are opting to purchase their textbooks online rather than the campus bookstore.

"The price of books at the student store are pretty high," said sociology major Keith Hernandez. "I would think that's why students are looking for a better price, for more affordability, because it is hard enough to pay tuition."

The Valley bookstore has offered several methods to aid students to purchase their textbooks. According to bookstore manager Mary John, before the semester began, the bookstore, Financial Aid and the Business Office worked together to offer a Book Credit Program. The program allowed students to purchase their textbooks on campus with a book loan that would be deducted from their Financial Aid award.

"All students who qualified were notified that that they had a $500 voucher waiting for them in the bookstore," said John. "They had a week to come in and use the voucher to buy whatever they wanted to buy in the bookstore so that it'll saved them from standing in the line."

Valley's Administrative Service Review Survey revealed that only 27 percent of students purchase their books on campus while 63 percent use the bookstore for purchasing office supplies. Ninety-seven percent of individuals said price is the most important factor when ordering books.

For instance, the newer edition of "We The People: An Introduction to American Politics" costs $65.99 on websites such as amazon.com, while it is sold on campus for $83.

Students also find themselves upgrading to new editions of books required each semester. Every new edition also marks an increase on the sales price for a textbook.

Although the campus bookstore has offered the option of renting books for a few semesters, many students think that the prices are still too high. Hernandez suggests that "one of the things that would be better is lowering the cost of the rental fee for books; if they would lower the cost of that, I think it would be better."

Valley's bookstore competes with websites such as amazon.com, chegg.com or half.com, which is why Veronica Soto, a BRM major, said, "[The bookstore] can't lower the prices because they're obviously going to lose money no matter what."

John said that one of the advantages of purchasing textbooks on campus is that students are investing their money back in their school.

"I understand that the books are cheaper online," said John, "but you are not sure if you're getting the right thing [and] by purchasing it here, you not only invest for yourself but also for ... somebody in the future."

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The last day to drope a class without receivng a W is Feb. 18 in person and by internet.

The Sheriff's Department will start enforcing the parking pass rule starting Feb. 19

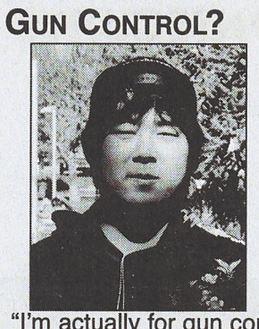
VALLEY VIEW | WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT GUN CONTROL?

"I really don't care ... nothing bad happend around here, so it really doesn't bother me."

- JOSE ROBLES
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

"We have the right to bear arms; it's in the constitution, and there's a reason for that."

- JOSEFINA HATTON
MEDIA ARTS/ENGLISH

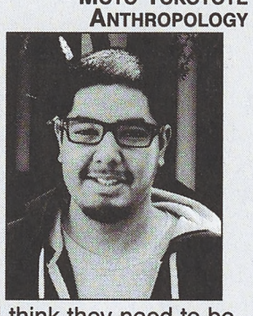


"I'm actually for gun control. If there's guns around, then martial arts would be useless."

- MOTO YOKOTOTE
ANTHROPOLOGY

"I'm against it, but then I'm with it; it depends on a person's mental state."

- JESSI ZUNIGA
GRAPHIC DESIGN



"I think they need to be more strict on gun control—limit the amount of bullets you can have."

- IRVING SANCHEZ
BUSINESS

PHOTOS BY JAHSAUDI PERKINS | VALLEY STAR

IT'S TIME FOR THE U.S. TO TAKE AWAY THE BIG GUNS

Reducing deaths should be the focus, not just ending violence.

RACHEL PARSONS
STAFF WRITER

Humans are violent. Thorough gun control on the national level must be legislated precisely because people will always commit horrific acts. This is not about reducing attacks and suppressing human nature. It is about reducing the instances of fatalities resulting from this violence.

For many Homo sapiens, the urge to behave violently is innate. From a biological point of view, the fight or flight urge is the strongest humans have. Over the millennia, certain people have developed a taste for the fight part of that equation. Since man could pick up a stone and throw it, some have thrown it at other men without provocation.

However, it is difficult to kill with a rock. It is not an efficient weapon, as they go. Human technological advancement has wielded more effective weapons: guns.

Last year, the world watched the United States with horror as shooters in Colorado, Oregon and Connecticut murdered 41 people. Two of the three gunmen are also dead.

These attackers used an array of guns, from handguns to military-grade assault rifles capable of putting dozens of rounds of ammunition into the air in seconds.

By contrast, the same day in December that a mentally ill man walked into a Newtown, Connecticut elementary school and wiped out 26 people, including 20 small children, a man in Central China walked into an elementary school and attacked 22 students with a knife.

No one died.

Sociologist Ding Xueliang, a doctor at the University of Science and Technology in Hong Kong, told CNN that the fact there were no fatalities in the Chinese tragedy was directly attributed to the attacker not having access to an efficacious weapon. China has some of the most strident gun control laws in the world.

The terrifying reality is that the United States, under the auspices of the Second Amendment to the Constitution, has given people inclined to commit murder an excellent weapon for doing it in mass, quickly and easily.

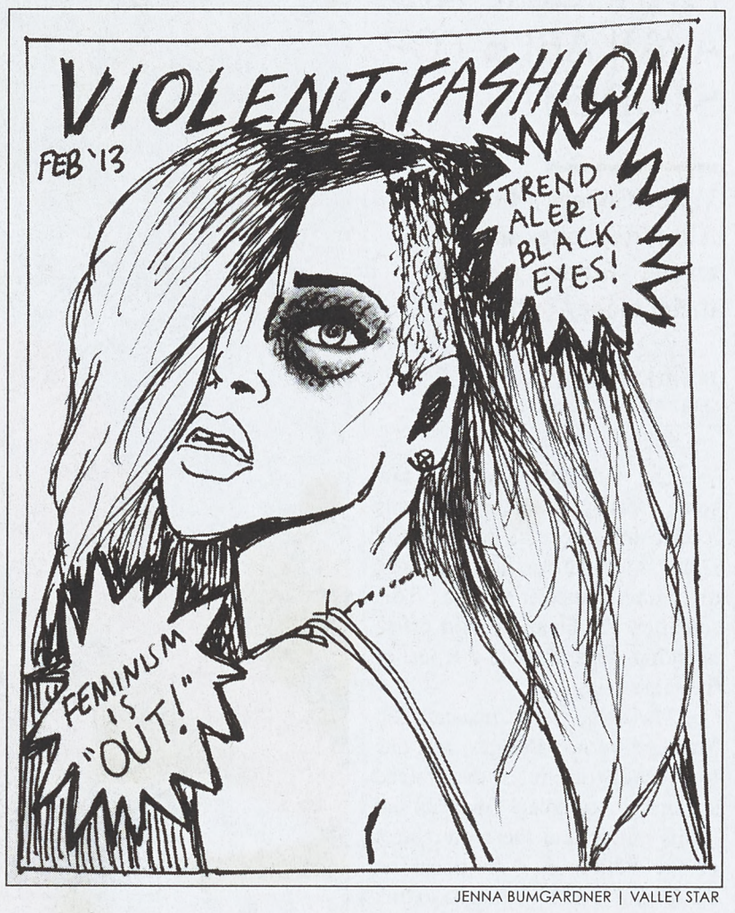
Ironically, Dr. Richard J. Gatling, creator of the precursor to the modern machine gun, invented his revolving barrel bullet sprayer with massive firepower to decrease the rates of battlefield deaths during the Civil War. He reasoned that if one gun could put out more bullets, then fewer soldiers would be needed to fight. He could not have imagined that today in this country nearly everyone has access to lighter, smaller guns that fire hundreds of rounds per minute.

There is an element of human nature that has necessitated violence to survive. But this element has evolved in some into the urge to hurt and kill wantonly. Some of these people are mentally ill. Others are not. Real, thorough gun control laws have to be passed and enforced in this country not to try to weed out the violence from society, but simply to reduce the numbers of people who die in violent struggles because Americans have easy access to highly effective weapons.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN CELEBRITY WORLD IMPACTS REAL WORLD

The rekindled relationship of musicians Rihanna and Chris Brown sends the wrong message to young, impressionable fans.

DEZIREE MILLER
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR



JENNA BUMGARDNER | VALLEY STAR

Nobody can forget the image leaked by police in 2009 of pop musician Rihanna's face left bruised and swollen by her boyfriend, rapper Chris Brown. Except perhaps the couple themselves who reunited in late 2012.

Many question her decision because the statistics of domestic abuse do not point to a bright future for the couple and do not set a good example for her fans—primarily young girls.

"I think it's wrong for her to go back," said engineering major Victor Gonzalez, "because then, kids are going to think it's OK to beat their girlfriends and they'll just stay with them."

While Rihanna argues she did not want to be a role model, that is part of the pop star package of fame, fortune and celebrity that is built on the minds and consumption of her fan base of young girls who want to be like her.

Women ages 20 to 24 are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the United States. When someone as popular as Rihanna can

accept abuse at the hands of her partner, young women may be inclined to do the same.

"...I wasn't going to let anybody's opinion get in the way of that. Even if it's a mistake, it's my mistake," Rihanna told Rolling Stone this month. "...he made a mistake, and he's paid his dues."

She's even appeared in court with Brown this month. Brown was put on probation for five years and sentenced to 180 days of community service for the assault.

"I think maybe she has to see for herself if it's going to work or else she will always wonder 'what if?'" said biology major Rose Epstein. "All you can do is hope that he has changed and she doesn't get hurt."

Still, Liz Claiborne Inc.'s "Love Is Not Abuse" 2011 College Dating Violence and Abuse Poll found that nearly half of all dating college women report having experienced violent or abusive dating behaviors. Twenty-two percent report actual physical abuse, sexual abuse or threats of physical violence. Despite the high number of students experiencing these types of abuse, more than one-third of college students say they would not know how to get help on campus if they found themselves in an abusive relationship.

It's wrong for her to go back because then, kids are going to think it's OK to beat their girlfriends and they'll just stay with them.

-Engineering major
Victor Gonzalez

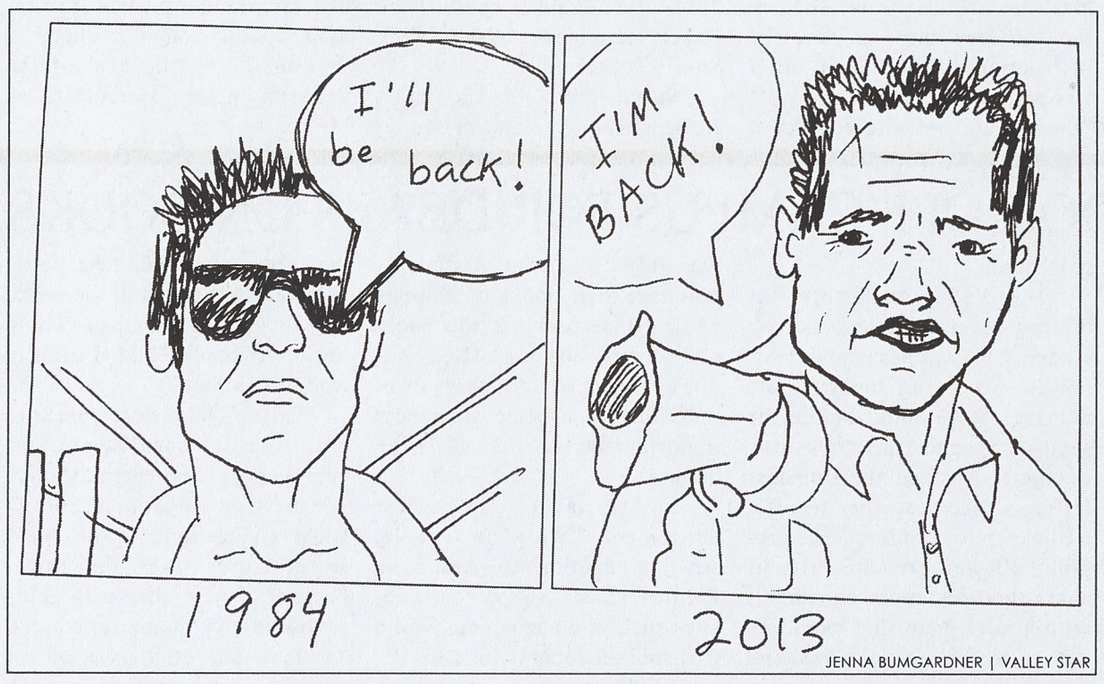
The Student Health Center can help students at Valley College in need. The center offers psychological services and up to 12 free appointments with a counselor per semester. They can also give referrals.

While it is undeniably Rihanna's choice to make in returning to someone who once abused her, students should not follow this trend and should seek help if in a similar situation. For hours and more information on Valley's psychological services, visit www.lavc.edu/studenthealth/psychologicalservices.html.

ACTION STARS OF THE '80S ARE COMING BACK WITH A BANG

'80s action icons such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Sylvester Stallone are making comebacks and genre aficionados couldn't be more pleased.

JOSH ESQUIVEL
STAFF WRITER



JENNA BUMGARDNER | VALLEY STAR

The 1980s are a reminder of the golden age for B-action flicks that dominated the box office throughout the decade, but more importantly the actors who portrayed the over-the-top protagonists in many of those films.

Quintessential action stars like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Sylvester Stallone are inarguably among the most prominent legends of this era in action movies. All three of them have contributed immensely to the continued success of the franchises they spawned and the genre as a whole.

In fact, each one of these icons has helped create, respectively, three of the largest and most profitable action franchises of all time: "The Terminator" and "Die Hard" franchises and all the Rambo flicks beginning with the no-holds-barred "First Blood." Not only have these wildly entertaining films won over audiences of all preferences, but they also continue to stand the test of time—or at the least the box office numbers would lead one to think so.

The overall success of Schwarzenegger, Willis and Stallone is unquestionable, but they weren't always first-round picks. A little background lesson on these stars of testosterone-filled blockbusters is in order.

Schwarzenegger's legacy is perhaps one of the greatest "rags to riches" stories of all time. In a nutshell, he was an underprivileged kid from Austria who took up weightlifting, became a bodybuilding champion and then sought to use his skills in the movie industry. After a few false starts, Arnie hit it big with the role he was born to play in, "Conan the Barbarian." After that, the hits—literally and figuratively—kept on coming with huge blockbusters like "Predator," "Total Recall," "True Lies" and several other mega-hits; oh yeah, and he was California's governor for a while.

Willis, arguably the most cinematically active of the three, was born in Germany and raised in New Jersey. He took in an interest in dramatic arts when he was in high school and pursed a career in the film industry after a number of off-Broadway productions. After starring in the hit romantic-comedy "Moonlighting" and demonstrating his versatility as an actor, he was cast to play the part of John McClane in the ground-pounding action thrill-ride "Die Hard"—the role that jumpstarted his career and propelled him into stardom.

Stallone had a less-than-amiable start in Hollywood. He was a ghetto kid from Hell's Kitchen with something to prove to the nay-sayers and harsh critics of his time.

His first films were a bit shoddy at best, but where there's a will, there's a way, and in 1976, Stallone hit the jackpot with his breakout role in the classic underdog turned boxing hero, "Rocky." The movie deals being thrown at Stallone were unprecedented, and after "First Blood" hit movie theatres in 1982, his name was solidified as one of the top action stars of the 1980s.

If recent theatrical releases are any indication, it is probably safe to say that the premiere 80s action stars have gotten their second-wind, and that, is simply awesome.

Movies like the recently released "The Last Stand" with Schwarzenegger and "Bullet to The Head" starring Stallone and Willis' highly-anticipated fifth installment in the "Die Hard" franchise, "A Good Day to Die Hard," will surely hit their mark with action lovers across the board.

GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be sent to:
editor@lavalleystar.com
or submitted online at
www.lavalleystar.com.
Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

DIANA ORTEGA, PHOTO EDITOR| VALLEY STAR

Peace Around The World - The Culture of Peace Exhibition on "Artists as Peacemakers", located on the first floor of the library, celebrates artists and the qualities they exemplify. The exhibition reopened at the beginning of the Spring semester, February 4 and has been extended until February 28.

NEW ARTISTS EXHIBIT AT VALLEY PROMOTES PEACE ON EARTH

The fourth "Culture of Peace" exhibit arrives at the Library and Academic Resource Center

JENNA BUMGARDNER
ONLINE EDITOR

"Artists As Peacemakers" has arrived at the Library and Academic Resource Center to raise awareness and create a meaningful dialogue about the role of artists around the world.

The exhibit is part of the traveling series "Culture of Peace," which was founded by the U.S. chapter of the Buddhist organization Soka Gakkai. A culture of peace, as defined by the United Nations, is a set of values, behaviors and attitudes that reject violence and solve conflicts through dialogue and negotiation.

"The common thread running through [the exhibit] is that each of us—every woman, man, and child—can contribute to creating a culture of peace," said Danny Hall, the West coast director of peace and community relations at Soka Gakkai, "And [it] will hopefully inspire the students at Los Angeles Valley College, who are the present and future leaders of society, to make contributing to a culture of peace a part of their lives as well."

This chapter of "Culture of Peace" features predominantly bright blue fabric panels with inspirational quotes, photos and information about how artists can cultivate peace around the world.

"Nancy Pearlman, LACCD Board of Trustee member, brought the exhibit to the attention of all the colleges in the district," said Deborah DiCesare,, dean of Academic Affairs and Economic Development. "Valley College thought the exhibit would be a nice compliment to the new Library Academic Resource Center."

The exhibit has more than 15 panels, the majority of which emphasize a particular value, such as perseverance or equality, and a famous artist who embodies that value. For example, one panel depicts musician Quincy Jones as representing harmony. His quote reads: "Imagine what a harmonious world it could be if every single person, both young and old, shared a little of what he is good at doing."

Students can view the exhibition at the Library and Academic Resource Center, directly across from the front doors. SGI-USA will be hosting a "Culture of Peace" lecture at its Santa Monica location on March 30 at 4 p.m. that will focus on raising awareness of human trafficking. Volunteer opportunities are also available to students through SGI- USA. For more information, visit www.sgi-usa.org.

THE VALLEY STAR INFO & STAFF

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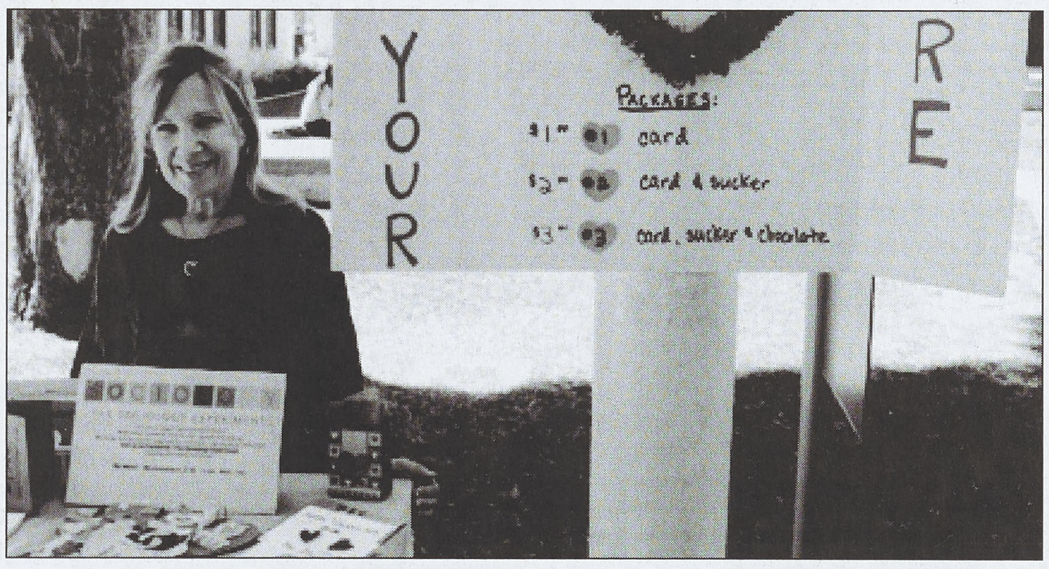

JOHN STRUBE | VALLEY STAR

FROM THE HEART - Annie Sevette of the Sociology Experiment club sells Valentine's Day gifts Tuesday outside the Student Services Complex. Gift options for tomorrow's holiday include a card for $1, a card and sucker for $2 or a card, sucker and chocolate candy for $3, with the proceeds benefitting the club.

LAVC'S STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM SAYS "BONJOUR" TO FRANCE

Valley students have the chance to study abroad this summer in Montpellier.

CLAIRE BRISLEY
STAFF WRITER

Valley is offering all students the chance to enrich their education and explore a new place with a summer abroad in France. The program will take place in the heart of Montpellier in the South of France.

"The world is a book, and those who do not travel have only read one page," said Dominique Merrill, French instructor and program leader of Valley college's study abroad program, quoting St. Augustine to describe the program. This month-long trip offers the ability to merge French and civilization classes. Students will immerse themselves in culture, history, tours, activities and weekend excursions.

The days abroad in France will include three hours of French language Monday through Friday focusing on developing fluency as well as four culture workshops about French civilization at the Institut Linguistique du Peyrou. Students can earn up to eight units of transferable credit.

"I had no idea of the profound impact it would have on me," said psychology major Lisa Ramos, who participated in the program last year. "And I am eternally grateful to the institute for giving me confidence in my pursuit of the French language as well as Professor Merrill and Valley for sponsoring the program."

When students are not attending school, they have the opportunity to get involved in cultural activities such as wine tasting, folk dancing, cooking classes and film nights in their free time.

While studying in France, students have the choice to either stay alone in a private studio with a kitchenette and bathroom or with a local family, which will help develop their language as well as provide them with meals each day.

Students will also have the chance to take six half-day and three full-day guided excursions led by Merrill. The French native has been teaching for more than 40 years.

"[It's] a life-changing experience," Merril said of studying abroad, "that allows you to completely immerse yourself in the culture while learning and observing a new language and society."

The price ranges from $3,665 when staying in a studio and $3,845 when staying with a host family. This includes four weeks of French language, four culture workshops, cultural activities, housing accommodations, half-day and full-day excursions and a month-long public transit pass in Montpellier.

The next informational meeting will be held Feb. 23 in Foreign Language 102 at noon. Students can also visit www.lavc.edu/montpellier/.

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MONARCHS LOSE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE GAME

The Valley College men's basketball team loses Bakersfield making it there fourth straight lose.

JULIO FLORES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The Valley College men's basketball team hosted Citrus College Saturday and lost 80-74, dropping its fourth consecutive conference game.

"We have been playing hard every game," said Monarchs coach Virgil Watson. "We've been really close every conference game but we have to follow through."

Despite eight turnovers by Monarchs' guard Cameron Bailey, Valley ended the first half with a 40-35 lead.

.Citrus' defense contained the green and gold's offense, disrupted their execution and forced them into missing easy shots. The Owls ended the game with 10 steals.

"Our team has hung in there through some tough games," said Valley Athletic Director Jim Fenwick.

At the start of the second half, both teams traded baskets, which saw the lead change hands a few times.

With 10:08 left to play, Valley's Genno Salima was fouled behind the 3-point line, giving him three attempts from the charity stripe. Salima capitalized on the opportunity, putting the Monarchs up 56-54.

The Owls' Terrel Todd hit a key 3-pointer with 2:54 left to play.

ERIKA SUPLECOVA | VALLEY STAR

Monarchs Lose - Monarchs men's basketball team played on Saturday against Citrus College, losing 74-80, making it their fourth consecutive loss.

"[Terrels] basket was a key three for us to win the game," said Citrus coach Chris Victor.

Citrus continued their offensive attack with Gregory Sequele, who hit a 12-foot jumper giving the Owls a 72-66 lead.

Towards the end of the game, the Monarchs Eddie La Torre got fouled and made two free throws, making the score 72-68 with 1:21 left to play. Citruses Darius Middleton would answer back with a basket of his own to put the Owls up by six with 44 seconds left to play.

Although the game got close towards the end, the Monarchs could not catch the Owls, losing their seventh conference game of the season.

"Whenever you get win on the road, it's a great one," Victor said. "This season we've been fighting back and we're going to finish right."

The Monarchs visit Bakersfield College today for a 5 p.m. tip off.

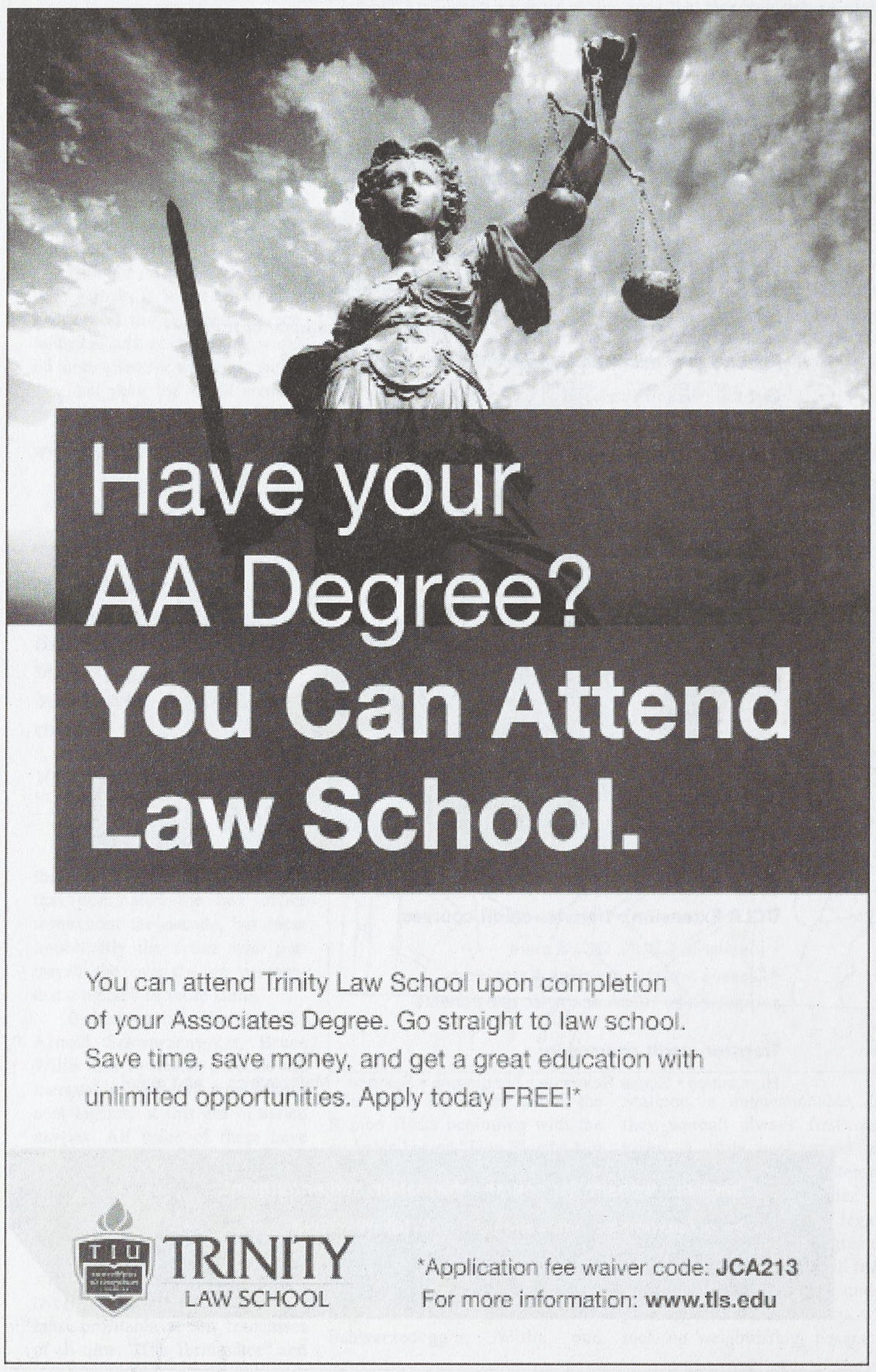
MONARCH SCHEDULES

Basketball:
Wednesday, Feb. 13
vs. Bakersfield
@ Bakersfield 5 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 16
vs. Glendale
@ Glendale 3 p.m.

Baseball:
Thursday, Feb. 14
vs. Golden West
@ Golden West 2 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 16
vs. Glendale
@ Valley 1 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 19
vs. Glendale
@ Glendale 2 p.m.

Women's Basketball:
Wednesday, Feb. 13
vs. Bakersfield
@ Bakersfield 7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 16
vs. West Los Angeles
@ Valley 3 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 20
vs. Santa Monica
@ Valley 7 p.m.

Softball:
Wednesday Feb. 13
vs. Rio Hondo
@ Rio Hondo 3 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 18
vs. Antelope Valley
@ Antelope Valley 3 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 20
vs. Chaffey
@ Chaffey 3 p.m.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COACH HANG RECALLS HER BEGINNINGS IN BASKETBALL

The 5-foot-2 inch coach reminisces about her career in basketball.

HANNAH POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Bright-eyed and sporting a Monarchs T-shirt, 5-foot-2 inch coach Monica Hang rushed to her office trying to catch her breath as she apologized for basketball practice running late. In her third season as the head coach of the Lady Monarchs, Hang reminisces how she first fell in love with the sport as a child.

"I started playing organized basketball in the sixth grade" she said. "And ever since I touched a basketball, I decided that I was going to play and be the best player I could be."

The native Californian's drive landed her a spot on the on the varsity basketball team at Mark Keppel High School in Alhambra as a freshman. She later became the starting point guard at Ventura College, where she helped lead her team to three state championships from 2000 to 20002

Hang's success continued as she transferred to Cumberland College in Kentucky on a full athletic scholarship. During her time there, she led her team to the state championships. Her squad also made an appearance in the national championships, proving that her uncommon height for a basketball player certainly was not a deficit.

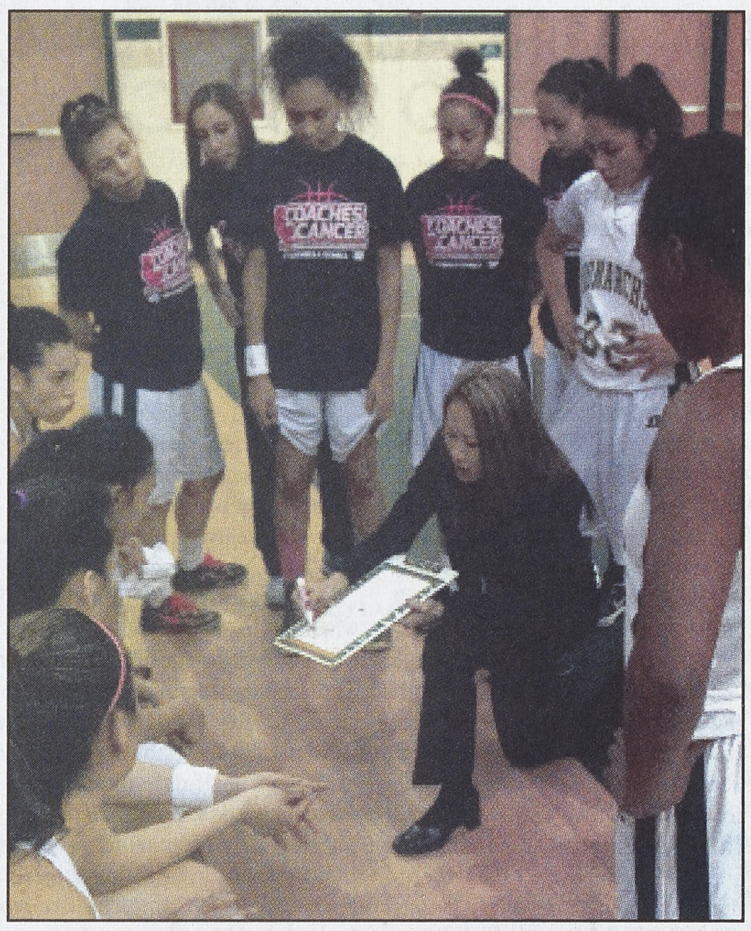
As she leans forward in her chair grinning with enthusiasm, she begins to talk about her most influential coach and how she developed as a player. Her dedication is infectious as its clear how passionate she is about this sport.

"Richard Marquis who played for the Lakers with Jerry West taught me 80 percent of what I know, everything to be able to survive as a 5-foot-2 guard," Hang said. "After watching my coaches throughout the years, that is when I decided this would be my career. I wanted to help these students. I grew up with nothing, and I can relate with a lot of them that face the same things I had to face. I want them to know that hard work really can lead to success."

When asked about her time at Valley thus far, she smiles and says, "I love it. I have the greatest players. If you can define team, that is what they are. They are the best team I have ever coached. They're like a family. It's like they're my daughters."

When asked about his time working with Monica, assistant coach Rafael Camacho used only one word, "Extraordinary."

The Monarchs who are ranked 9th in Southern California are currently competing in the Western State Conference Southern Division Games. The Monarchs (7-1) will face Bakersfield tonight at home, the only team that has beat them in the tournament. Tip off is at 7 p.m.



ERIKA SUPLECOVA | VALLEY STAR

HEAD IN THE GAME - Women's basketball head coach Monica Hang is talking to her players during last Saturdays game against Citrus College.